

REMARKS

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the very thorough consideration given the present application. In view of the above amendment, Applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Claims 1-6, 8-20 and 31 are now present in this application. Claims 1, 9 and 31 are independent. Claims 7 and 28-30 have been canceled, claim 31 has been added, and claims 1, 4, 5, 9 and 18 have been amended. No new matter has been added. Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 1st Paragraph

Claims 1-20 and 28-30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 1st Paragraph. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner states that the original specification does not disclose the feature, "wherein the communication connector is directly connected to the server and operates to transmit the audio data to a client upon the client's request," as recited in claim 1 previously presented. In order to overcome this rejection, Applicant has amended claim 1 to recite "wherein the communication connector operates to transmit the audio data to a client upon the client's request."

The Examiner also states that the original specification does not disclose the feature, "wherein said transmitting is performed bypassing an intermediary between the e-mail server and the client," as recited in claim 9 previously presented. In order to overcome this rejection, Applicant has amended claim 9 to delete this feature.

Further, the Examiner also states that the original specification does not disclose the feature, "wherein the transmitting is performed without going through an intermediary between an e-mail server and a client," as recited in claim 28 previously presented. Claim 28 has been canceled, and thus this rejection is moot.

Applicant respectfully submits that the claims, as amended, are fully supported by and adequately described in the written description of the invention. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 2nd Paragraph

Claims 1-8 and 29 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 2nd Paragraph. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner indicates that it is not clear as to how a communication connector can be directly connected to a server. In order to overcome this rejection, Applicant has amended claim 1 to delete this feature. Thus, amended claim 1 recites, among other features, “wherein the communication connector operates to transmit the audio data to a client upon the client’s request.” Applicant respectfully submits that the claims, as amended, particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 & 103

Claims 1-5, 28 and 29 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Brunson. Claims 6-20 and 30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brunson in view of Hashimoto et al. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 1 has been amended to recite, among other features, that the e-mail data further includes gender information and the audio data generator is configured to generate an audio signal in a male voice if the gender information identifies that a sender of the e-mail data is a male sender registered in an e-mail address list, and to generate the audio signal in a female voice if the gender information identifies that the sender of the e-mail data is a female sender registered in the e-mail address list. Amended independent claim 9 includes similar features in a varying scope.

These features are supported at least by paragraph [0019] of the specification. For example, the specification states that the e-mail message data contains information for identifying the gender of an e-mail sender for reproducing a man/woman voice when converting

the e-mail data into an audio data using the address list based on whether or not the sender is registered, and information for the number of e-mails sent (see paragraph [0019] of the specification).

Brunson teaches a synchronizer 10 having an e-mail interface 11 for communicating with e-mail server 20 and a voice-mail interface 13 for communicating with voice-mail server 30, wherein the synchronizer inter-connects the e-mail system 29 and the voice-mail system 39 (see col. 9, lines 14-26 of Brunson). Brunson further teaches converting the email message's header into a message header component of the corresponding voice-mail message (see col. 14, lines 1-5 of Brunson). However, Brunson in nowhere teaches the e-mail data further includes gender information, as recited in amended independent claims 1 and 9. Further, Brunson does not teach generating a male voice or a female voice based on the gender information. Therefore, Brunson fails to teach or suggest the e-mail data further includes gender information and the audio data generator is configured to generate an audio signal in a male voice if the gender information identifies that a sender of the e-mail data is a male sender registered in an e-mail address list, and to generate the audio signal in a female voice if the gender information identifies that the sender of the e-mail data is a female sender registered in the e-mail address list, as recited in amended independent claim 1 and similarly recited in amended independent claim 9.

Hashimoto et al. teaches a speech mail system where a speech by a user is recognized in a speech recognition interface (see Abstract of Hashimoto et al.) Hashimoto further teaches the synthesized speech attributes specifying the appropriate reading manners for the different senders. For example, in Hashimoto, the mail received from Mr. Tamura is to be read slowly by a male voice, whereas the mail received from Ms. Nakayama is to be read fast by a female voice, and other mails are to be read at a normal speed by a normal pitched male voice (see col. 50, lines 4-8 of Hashimoto et al.). However, Hashimoto et al. does not teach the e-mail data further includes gender information, as recited in amended independent claims 1 and 9. The speech attributes in Hashimoto et al. do not include information on the gender of the sender, but only specifies reading manners for different senders. For example, Hashimoto et al. does not teach any information specifying gender that causes the mail received from Mr. Tamura is to be read in a male voice, but the male voice is only a specified reading manner for Mr. Tamura. Therefore,

Hashimoto et al. fails to teach or suggest the e-mail data further includes gender information and the audio data generator is configured to generate an audio signal in a male voice if the gender information identifies that a sender of the e-mail data is a male sender registered in an e-mail address list, and to generate the audio signal in a female voice if the gender information identifies that the sender of the e-mail data is a female sender registered in the e-mail address list, as recited in amended independent claim 1 and similarly recited in amended independent claim 9.

Therefore, the cited references fail to teach or suggest the features of amended independent claims 1 and 9. Accordingly, amended independent claims 1 and 9, and each of the claims depending therefrom, are allowable.

Claims Added

Claim 31 has been added for the Examiner's consideration.

Independent claim 31 recites a combination of elements in an apparatus for converting e-mail (electronic mail) data into audio data, including a communication connector connected to an e-mail sever via a communication line; a controller configured to control a conversion of e-mail data received from a server into e-mail message header data, e-mail content data and e-mail attachment-type data; an audio data generator configured to convert the e-mail message header data, e-mail content data and e-mail attachment-type data into audio data including corresponding audio header data, audio content data and audio attachment-type identifier data, the audio attachment-type identifier data being an announcement of the existence and type of an attachment to the e-mail, wherein the e-mail message header information identifies a sender's name, a sending date, and a subject of the e-mail; a memory configured to store the e-mail data and the audio data; a video unit configured to process the e-mail message data; and a display unit configured to display the e-mail message data processed by the video unit, wherein the communication connector operates to transmit the audio data to a client upon client's request, wherein the e-mail data further includes gender information and the audio data generator is configured to generate an audio signal in a male voice if the gender information identifies that the sender of the e-mail is a male sender registered in an e-mail address list, and to generate the

audio signal in a female voice if the gender information identifies that the sender of the e-mail is a female sender registered in the e-mail address list, and wherein the controller is further configured to identify a total number of e-mails received by the apparatus and the audio data generator is configured to generate a corresponding audio message to send to the client.

Applicant respectfully submits that this combination of elements as set forth in independent claim 31 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record. In particular, as explained above, the cited references fail to teach or suggest “the e-mail data further includes gender information and the audio data generator is configured to generate an audio signal in a male voice if the gender information identifies that the sender of the e-mail is a male sender registered in an e-mail address list, and to generate the audio signal in a female voice if the gender information identifies that the sender of the e-mail is a female sender registered in the e-mail address list,” as recited in claim 31. Further, the cited references fail to teach or suggest that “the controller is further configured to identify a total number of e-mails received by the apparatus and the audio data generator is configured to generate a corresponding audio message to send to the client,” as recited in claim 31.

Consideration and allowance of claim 31 are respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Mr. Jun S. Ha, Reg. No. 58,508 at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

By

Esther H. Chong
Registration No.: 40,953

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP
8110 Gatehouse Road
Suite 100 East
P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, Virginia 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000
Attorney for Applicant